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forth in the fall, when every one has returned from his summer vacation and when the schools, libraries and churches are en-

tering upon another season's activities, would, in our opinion, arouse the same enthusiasm and produce far more lasting results.

### MISSOURI'S BOOK WEEK

CHARLES H. COMPTON, *Assistant Librarian, Public Library, St. Louis, Missouri*

#### FOURTH GENERAL SESSION

The success of Missouri Book Week was not due to any special effort upon the part of the Book Week Committee. It was not due to any special efforts upon the part of librarians. Missouri Book Week was a success because it had the elements of success within it, and it almost could be said that it couldn't have failed. The reason for this is that people are becoming increasingly interested in books and libraries, and newspaper men realize this. Much newspaper space was obtained with no effort on our part. For example in St. Louis three of the four newspapers, the *Post-Dispatch*, *Globe-Democrat* and the *Times* printed editorials. These editorials showed an intelligent grasp of library needs on the part of the editorial writers. They emphasized the need for county libraries,—they deplored the lack of libraries in the state.

Missouri Book Week was observed February 12-18. Briefly now as to what the committee did. In the early part of January, a publicity outline for conducting Book Week was mailed to librarians in the state. It had suggestions relating to newspaper stories, co-operation with schools, churches, and book stores, exhibits, open house at library, etc. There were about 12 suggestions, all being plans which had been tried and found successful. It was not expected that any one library would follow all the suggestions but it was interesting later in checking up to find how generally they had been used. One plan that seemed most popular especially in the smaller libraries was to have an open house during the week. Exhibits were on display. Women's club members acted as reception committees.

A suggestion for newspaper publicity which proved successful was to have prominent men and women of a community tell what books had had the greatest influence in their lives.

Large and small newspapers printed such symposiums.

Three releases were mailed out to librarians and also direct to the papers. The mimeographing and mailing of all material was handled by the state Library Commission. One release was the Governor's proclamation, setting aside Book Week. Another was a statement from the state superintendent of public instruction endorsing Book Week. The third was a statement from Mr. Bundy regarding establishment of county libraries. Naturally the Governor's proclamation received the most publicity—newspapers very generally printed it.

We have a record of 33 towns and cities which took part in Book Week, and undoubtedly there were others. More than 100 newspaper articles were received mostly through a clipping bureau, which, of course, does not clip nearly all the newspapers. For example in St. Louis there were 23 different newspaper items—making as a whole more than a newspaper page—only 8 were received through the clipping bureau. The best results were obtained in the smaller cities and towns. In the *Library Journal*, I called attention to the notable success of Book Week in Hannibal and Sedalia. Farmington, a little community, with a small library, had any amount of publicity in the papers and the greatest interest in the schools. These smaller communities used the releases which the committee sent out adding local items. In addition they put local library news of their own in the papers.

In all the three releases which the committee sent out, one fact was emphasized—namely that 89 counties in the state of Missouri had no free tax-supported public libraries, and that according to the estimate of the Library Commission two million people within the state were without library privi-

leges. This was the one striking fact. It got wide newspaper publicity. It received special editorial attention. It was recognized as a disgrace to the State of Missouri. It is a fact which, I think, has significance as related to a national library week. For the most striking fact relating to the library situation in the nation as a whole as well as in Missouri is the inadequacy of present library advantages. Inadequacy of funds—inadequacy of personnel—inadequacy of salaries—a total and complete inadequacy when judged by any standard of the need for libraries. This inadequacy is the striking fact to be used in national library week as well as in Missouri.

I trust that no one will think I have any illusions as to what one national library week in 1923 will do to overcome this inadequacy. I have no such illusions, for you must remember I am now from Missouri. However, perhaps during such a library week some mustard seeds might be dropped and in due time a few county libraries might spring up.

Missouri Book Week demonstrated to our satisfaction that it was an easy way to get publicity for libraries—publicity which would not have been obtained otherwise. This should have some significance in considering a national library week.

## HOW PUBLISHERS AND BOOKSELLERS ARE GETTING GOOD NATIONAL PUBLICITY

By MARION HUMBLE, *Assistant Secretary, National Association of Book Publishers, New York*

### SUMMARY. FOURTH GENERAL SESSION

A factory of ideas is a busy and interesting workshop. The Year-Round Bookselling Committee was organized in 1920 for the purpose of manufacturing ideas to interest people in reading more books and in buying more books. This organization came partly as a result of two successful Children's Book Weeks which had spread information about children's reading throughout the country by way of the bookstores, public libraries, schools, women's clubs, parent-teachers' associations, newspapers and magazines. The committee was to manufacture ideas that should help the bookseller and publisher think more in terms of the average person. It was to create and develop ideas that should reach the average person's interests and turn these interests into a desire for books.

A seasonal program was adopted, with the suggestion to publishers and booksellers that they advertise titles along certain lines that people would be apt to follow. February, for instance, with great interest in American biography, seems an appropriate month for telling people about the splendid books of American biography, citizenship and history; springtime seems to be the natural season to call attention to books on the out-of-doors; May, to books as ideal commencement gifts;

June, to books as wedding gifts; summer as the time for books for vacation and camp, etc. Posters and sales suggestions are prepared each month to help the dealers. A semi-monthly news sheet gives dealers ideas to develop. The publishers' travelling salesmen and trade letters also push these seasonal features with the booksellers, each publisher using the features of the plan wherever appropriate in selling his own books. Information about these features and prepared 300-word press releases are sent frequently to newspapers and magazines. These releases are all general, never mentioning specific books, but stimulating the idea of reading. They have included such subjects as:

"Taking a Mental Inventory"—"A Home Question Hour"—"Find It in Books"—"Back to Nature Books"—"We Are the Books We Read"—"The Housekeepers' Library"—"Reading Business Books," etc. Clippings which the committee receive show that these editorials are often used in entirety.

The magazines take special ideas and develop them along their own lines. Their use of features of the program sometimes follows the mailing of marked copies of the news sheet or is sometimes the result of personal letters and calls. Articles which have fol-